

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION CPR-01

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 PM-03 EUR-10 EA-13 CIAE-00 INR-10

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8662

S E C R E T PARIS 10212

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, FR

SUBJECT: FRENCH REQUEST FOR LANDING PERMISSION IN
PACIFIC

1. QUAI (DE MIRIBEL - PACTS AND DISARMAMENT) RAISED WITH EMBOFF APRIL 25 FRENCH REQUEST FOR OVERFLIGHT AND LANDING PERMISSION IN US TERRITORIES IN PACIFIC OCEAN, WHICH FRENCH EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON HAD FAILED TO OBTAIN FROM USG. REQUEST COVERS SIX C-L60 MILITARY TRANSPORT PLANES (IN 3 FLIGHTS OF 2 PLANES EACH) EN ROUTE TO PAPEETE, TAHITI, FOR LANDINGS IN GUAM (12, 14, AND 16 MAY), BUCHOLTZ AFB IN MARSHALL ISLANDS (14, 16, AND 18 MAY), AS WELL AS RETURN FLIGHTS BEGINNING ONE WEEK LATER. MIRIBEL SAID THAT OSTENSIBLE REASON FOR USG NON-APPROVAL WAS LACK AVIATION GASOLINE (OF WHICH 8 TONS PER PLANE PER LANDING REQUIRED), BUT UNDERSTANDS REAL MOTIVE MAY BE CLOSED MILITARY AREA IN PHOENIX ISLANDS.

2. QUAI REQUESTS USG RECONSIDER THIS APPLICATION; THEY PROPOSE THAT PAGO-PAGO BE SUBSTITUTED FOR CANTON/ TOPHAM IF LATTER REPRESENTS PROBLEM.

3. IN ORIGINAL REQUEST ITEMS CARRIED BY THESE TRANSPORT PLANES WERE IDENTIFIED AS "AERONAUTICAL MATERIEL".

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MIRIBEL TELEPHONED ARMED FORCES MINISTRY IN FRONT OF

EMBOFF AND RECEIVED FURTHER EXPLANATION THAT CARGO CONSISTS OF TWO DISMANTLED JAGUAR PLANES PLUS MATERIAL FOR REASSEMBLY. MIRIBEL ALSO GAVE STANDARD ASSURANCE THAT NO NUCLEAR MATERIALS WOULD BE TRANSPORTED; HE ADMITTED IMPLICITLY THAT FLIGHTS ARE RELATED TO NUCLEAR TESTS. HE SAID PURPOSE OF CIRCUITOUS ROUTING IS TO AVOID AUSTRALIA WITH TRANSPORT PLANE WHICH CAN COVER ONLY ABOUT 2,000 KILOMETERS PER HOP.

4. IN PAST, GOF HAS BEEN MOST COOPERATIVE IN APPROVING US REQUESTS FOR OVERLIGHT OF FRENCH TERRITORY IN NON-ROUTINE CIRCUMSTANCES (I.E. LATE FILING OF OVERFLIGHT REQUEST). MOREOVER, AS DEPARTMENT AWARE WE HAVE APPROXIMATELY 40,000 US MILITARY OVERFLIGHTS OF FRENCH TERRITORY ANNUALLY. WHILE GOF HAS MADE NO RPT NO DIRECT LINK BETWEEN THEIR OVERFLIGHT REQUESTS ABOVE, AND OUR FAR MORE NUMEROUS FREQUENCY OF OVERFLIGHTS OF FRENCH TERRITORY, WE BELIEVE THIS REQUEST SHOULD BE CONSIDERED IN TERMS OF OUR SUBSTANTIAL RELIANCE ON GOF COOPERATION IN THIS RESPECT.

5. RECOMMENDATION: WE REALIZE THAT THERE MAY BE FACTORS INVOLVED OF WHICH EMBASSY UNAWARE. BASED ON INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO EMBASSY, WE RECOMMEND THAT FRENCH REQUEST BE APPROVED SOONEST.

STONE

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NNN

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